

August 13, 2004

Dear Federal Communications Commissioners,

RE: 03-123 - Video Mail
SUPPORT

On behalf of NorCal Center on Deafness, I wish to submit support for the record to this docket, supporting CSD's position on video mail in its entirety. To highlight a couple of points: 1). It makes no sense what so ever, for the Commission to be considering whether to reimburse only video mail messages left from a Deaf person calling the hearing individual voice mail system, but question whether or not to consider reimbursement when the hearing person returns the call and leaves a message in return? Both are equally important, and both should be reimbursable. To end up with a decision on this issue supporting only the messages we leave on a hearing persons voice mail via video mail, would be to then indicate that Deaf people receiving Video mail messages from hearing callers are substandard and therefore not important. Please consider this particular question discriminatory. You either reimburse all or not at all. One way is not more important than the other. 2). The mere fact that up until this time, Deaf people have actually gone out to buy a piece of equipment virtually worthless to us, until we have means to access its voice answering machine contents, is in itself comical and somewhat degrading. Phone mail features such as video mail, is functionally equivalent to that which is available to people without hearing loss or speech disabilities.

Last but not least, as the FCC has indicated, it seeks ways to saving Interstate funds. I would hope out of all the points made, the most important one that makes sense is the rationale for session minutes used. Length of time spent retrieving messages currently practiced, whether it be accessing a Deaf person's voice answering machine via regular TRS and/or VRS, is actually longer in session minutes, than it would be had video mail been in place. To go through the arduous process of calling the relay to then call back and patiently wait while messages are heard and then typed back one by one, is definitely not an equivalent function, and most certainly, not cost effective.

Yours Truly,

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